



Appleby Archaeology

UPDATE

Summer 98

Field Trip

This Summer has not been a good one for archaeology. Excavation is particularly difficult if not impossible in wet weather. These problems were evident last month when a dozen of us visited Hadrian's wall. The day stayed fine for our visit to Birdoswald, the Banks east turret and Lunch at Walltown Crag, however by mid afternoon the rain was torrential. The excavations of the fort at Vindolanda had been abandoned by the time of our visit and we all made a dash for the tearoom. The museum there is excellent and I would recommend a visit to Vindolanda to anyone interested in the Romans. They will be excavating there (weather permitting) until the end of August.

Tullie House

One event which will not be stopped by rain is the Roman artefacts workshop at Tullie House. Please note that due to problems at the museum this did not take place on 6th August as planned but has been rescheduled for **Thursday 20th Aug**. There are still a few places left. If anyone is interested in coming let me know.

Meetings

Our regular Monday slot for meetings at the Appleby Grammar School has been taken over by an aromatherapy class run by Appleby Adult Education. Several members have also requested that meetings be moved from a Monday night as this clashes with several other groups in Appleby. This seems to be the perfect opportunity therefore to change the day of our meetings. I shall be negotiating a room with the Grammar School when they open again next term and meetings will most likely be on a Tuesday from now on. I hope

this pleases more members than it displeases!

A list of meetings and speakers will be sent out early next month once a room is arranged.

Research Meeting

At the research meeting in June we discussed the possibilities for research in Appleby. We decided it would be a good idea to begin by compiling a database of what is already known about the archaeology of the area. This will be started over the winter period and will provide a solid base from which to undertake further research.

I found it particularly useful to get some feedback from other members of the group. It was suggested that we have more walks exploring the archaeology of the area (see below). If anyone knows of any places they would like to visit with the group do get in touch.

Thanks to Chris Wilson for the use of his room at the Crown and Cushion. Thanks also to Georgina Plowright for her article on the group which appeared both in the Herald and the Messenger in June, giving us some valuable publicity. Her report on Richard Newman's talk is included overleaf for those who did not make the meeting (and to refresh the memory of those who did).

Courses

Andrew Pierce would like to remind members that O and A level courses in archaeology are being run at the Ullswater College beginning in September. (Ring the college for more details). Appleby Adult Education is also running an introduction to archaeology at the Grammar school starting next month.

Thankyou to everyone for your support, help, suggestions and ideas over our first six months.

Martin Railton

Local Archaeology Walks

^{23rd}
Murton Lead Mines: Sunday ~~30th~~ Aug. 2.00pm Meet at the Fell gate

Industrial remains and splendid views across the Eden Valley NY730220

Flakebridge Woods: Sunday 20th Sep, 2.00pm Meet Flakebridge road end

Castle Hill settlement, hut circles and an Iron Age Boundary NY697204

This newsletter was
designed to save
paper, without the
need for an envelope.
If anyone experiences
any problems with it
please let me know.

Work by the University of Lancaster Archaeological Unit

From excavating a remote medieval farmhouse to salvage work on nineteenth century industrial landscapes, an enormous variety of work is standard for the University of Lancaster Archaeological Unit. In his lecture to the Appleby Archaeology Group on 6 July, Mr Richard Newman, the Unit's Director, described the range of work the Unit undertakes in response to threats to Cumbria's archaeology. Much of the work is funded on the 'polluter pays' principle, by the firms undertaking developments. Other funds come from local authorities, and from other bodies which protect the landscape and its archaeology, such as the National Parks and English Heritage.

The type of work can vary, depending on the threat. A lot of it is evaluation, to ascertain the potential damage before a proposal is given the go-ahead. Sometimes it is excavation in advance of or during work, like that done in conjunction with the laying of the North West Ethylene gas pipeline in 1991, which uncovered a Dark Age site at Fremington near Brougham, a Roman cremation cemetery below Low Borrow Bridge, as well as an adjacent medieval farmstead. More recently, excavation has been done in advance of the town centre re-development in Kendal by Boots Properties.

Sometimes the work is a watching brief only, recording, but not excavating, structures and finds which



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PHYLLIS ROUSTON
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may come up during development work. Other work may be the recording of standing buildings, such as the farmhouse at High Wreah which was destroyed in advance of coal extraction, or at Pendragon Castle in order to improve its conservation.

Field survey is an important element, and the unit has completed a survey of the earthwork sites in the Howgill Hills, in order to better understand the low-level agricultural threats to this type of ancient landscape. The recording of the prehistoric Langdale stone axe factories was similarly to enable better conservation management, and included flying all the survey equipment up in a skip suspended from a helicopter! Other work, carried out with English Heritage, contributes towards the Monuments Protection Programme, identifying new vulnerable sites not currently Listed or Scheduled.

However full-scale excavation is rarely possible. Work is usually limited by budget, time, and by the amount of space available, and Mr Newman described some of the frustrations of such 'key-hole' archaeology. He also described how the Unit works outside Cumbria, with offices in Newcastle, and at their main base in Lancaster. Like many of the other regional archaeological units, the Unit has also worked abroad, including in Nepal and Laos.

by Georgina Plowright
